MEMORIES:07
-BEEP-
-BOOP-
.....
Yawn
HOW LONG ARE YOU PLANNING TO KEEP THAT UP?
HEY, YOU'RE KIND OF IN THE WAY THERE...
IT'LL BE TOO LATE IF I JUST WAIT FOR SOME-THING TO HAPPEN!
KEEP IT DOWN!
JUST BECAUSE TSUKASA IS LIVING WITH ISLA NOW...
CLING

I GUESS IT'S ANOTHER ALL-NIGHTER FOR HER ...
GIVEN THAT REPLY ...
YEAH, YEAH, I GOT IT.
WELL, I'M GOING TO SLEEP.
JUST TAKE IT EASY, ALRIGHT?
YEAH, GOOD NIGHT
GOOD NIGHT, ZACK!
IT'S BEEN SOME TIME SINCE WE'VE BEEN ON ROOKIE TRAINING DUTY
SIGH
IT'S BEEN UNEXPECTEDLY ROCKY.
SIGH
AS FOR HOW THEY'VE BEEN DOING SINCE THEN,
RETRIEVAL COMPLETE
TSUKASA AND ISLA FINISHED THEIR FIRST CASE SAFELY, BUT,

I'm so sorry!
AND MICHIRU HAS TO GO AROUND TO MAKE UP FOR IT.
Isla?
FREEZE
I'M NOT SURE WHY, BUT,
W-Wait-Isla?!
A door-bell-like noise
ding dong ding dong ding dong ding dong
WHEN ISLA GOES OUT INTO THE FIELD FOR THE FIRST TIME, SHE GETS ALL AWKWARD AGAIN
AND IN THE END, THEY PULL OFF THE RETRIEVAL CLEANLY.
THANKS, WE MANAGED SOMEHOW...
WHEN THAT HAPPENS, SHE JUST HELPS OUT WITH THE APPROACH,
WHAT'S HE GOOD FOR IF HE CAN'T EVEN HELP OUT THAT MUCH?!
A SPOTTER ISN'T SUPPOSED TO JUST SIT THERE AND LOOK PRETTY!
AND TO TOP IT OFF, HE—
THE BRUNT OF MICHIRU'S DISCON-TENT IS DIRECTED AT—
IT'S TSUKASA'S FAULT!

SLAM
TO THINK I WORKED SO HARD TO GET THIS JOB...
AND THAT GUY, WITHOUT ANY WORK OR ENTHUSIASM...
BAM
CRASH
TO THINK HE GOT IN USING A CONNECTION!
WHAT THE FUCK IS THAT ABOUT?!
LATELY, AFTER SHE HEATS HERSELF UP GRUMBLING AND COMPLAINING ABOUT TSUKASA,
...AND SO,
SHE'S FALLEN INTO THAT SORT OF PATTERN.
I may have been too hard on him...
AND THEN REGRETS IT LATER, AFTER SHE COOLS DOWN...
SHE BOMBARDS HIM WITH INSULTS,
No wonder you're useless.
Getting in without any effort...
Ahh, you did get in with a connection, after all.
IT SEEMS TSUKASA HAS BEEN WORKING HARD AS ISLA'S PARTNER, TOO.
Just having someone listen to them calms a lot of people down.
First you should to hear out what they have to say.
I see.
THAT BEING SAID,

"A Giftia has a heart,
And so does its owner"
IT SEEMS MICHIRU HAS ACKNOWLEDGED THAT, TOO,
AND LAID TERMINAL ONE'S PRINCIPLES DOWN FOR HIM.
Sorry.
I said a lot of mean things earlier.
SHE'S APOLOGIZED FOR BEING TOO HARD ON HIM, TOO.
AND THE ROOKIE TRAINING PROGRAM IS OVER.
MICHIRU, WHO'S BEEN NERVOUS EVER SINCE TSUKASA SHOWED UP, SHOULD ALSO CALM DOWN NOW...
—IS WHAT I THOUGHT, BUT ...
EVEN SO,
IT SEEMS WE CAN LET THOSE TWO HANDLE THEMSELVES NOW.

AT LAST ...
THE TIME HAS COME ...
MENACING
IN OTHER WORDS, TSUKASA IS MOVING INTO ISLA'S APARTMENT.
PARTNERS ARE SUPPOSED TO LIVE TOGETHER.
.....
IS OBVIOUSLY NOT GOING TO BE COMFORTABLE WITH TSUKASA, A HUMAN MALE, LIVING WITH THE DEFENSELESS ISLA.
EVEN WHEN IT WAS ME, A GIFTIA WHO LOOKS LIKE A CHILD,
MICHIRU, WHO OVERREACTED ABOUT LIVING WITH A GUY
AREN'T QUITE OVER JUST YET.
IT LOOKS LIKE THE DAYS OF MICHIRU BEING ON ISLA AND TSUKASA'S CASE

clink
chatter
SEV-
ERAL
DAYS
LATER
DORM
CAFETERIA
HEY, HEY,
MICHIRUCCHI.
I HEARD
SOME KIND OF
COMMOTION
FROM
ISLACCHI'S
ROOM
YESTERDAY.
DID
SOMETHING
HAPPEN?
SOMETHING
WENT "BAM!",
RIGHT?
Ah
DID TSU-
KASAC-
CHI
PUT MY
GRAND LUCKY
PERVERT
STRATEGY
INTO ACTION?
HE WAS WORKING
OUT WITHOUT HIS
SHIRT ON, LIKE HE
WAS TRYING TO
SHOW OFF...
...
THAT
PER-
VERT...
OH, I
SEE
...

AHH, SO THAT'S WHAT THAT HUGE THUMP WAS.
APPARENTLY, HIS HAND SLIPPED AND HE JAMMED A DUMBBELL INTO THE WALL.
WHAT THE HELL IS HE TRYING TO DO...
click
click
clack
IT WAS LOUD ENOUGH TO REACH ME TWO ROOMS AWAY, AFTER ALL...
... I THOUGHT MY HEART WAS GOING TO POP OUT OF MY CHEST.
THUD!
IF SHE WAS ON ALERT LIKE THAT WHEN IT HAP-PENED...
WELL ...
... COME TO THINK OF IT,
WHAT THE HELL WERE YOU LOOK-ING FOR-WARD TO...
clack
I WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO IT, TOO. THAT GOOD-FOR-NOTHING TSUKASACCHI.
click
BUT, IT'S A PITY.
MY GRAND LUCKY PERVERT STRATEGY WILL HAVE TO WAIT.

munch
munch
IF IT WERE ME, NEVER MIND GETTING CLOSER TO MY PARTNER,
I'D KICK THEM OUT AFTER THAT!
HUH,
IS THAT RIGHT.
ERU, THIS "GRAND LUCKY PERVERT STRATEGY" OF YOURS ..
ISN'T IT BASICALLY JUST PEEPING?
OF COURSE!
IF THEY ACTUALLY DARED TO WALK IN ON ME IN THE SHOWER OR SOMETHING,
I'D THROW THEM OUT OF HERE THAT MINUTE...
AH, COME TO THINK OF IT,
hah
hah
ZACK, DETAILS ...!
WELL, THE FIRST DAY I MOVED IN HERE, MICHIRU—
AHH!
!?
I FEEL LIKE YOU DID SOMETHING LIKE THAT TO ME AT SOME POINT...
spit
WELL, MICHIRU, SOUNDS LIKE YOU'RE UP TO SOME THINGS YOURSELF, AREN'T YOU?
I- IT'S NOT LIKE THAT!

SEVERAL DAYS AFTER THAT
HAHAHA,
HE MESSED UP COOKING SO BADLY THAT THE SPRINKLERS TURNED ON?
THIS ISN'T A LAUGHING MATTER.
...
ISLA'S CLOTHES AND SKIRT...?
BUT, HEARING ABOUT IT, IT SOUNDS LIKE IT HAD TO HAPPEN...
THAT'S WHAT TSUKASA SAID, TOO, BUT...
CROSS-DRESSING AND WRITHING ON THE FLOOR...
AH...
munch munch
THOSE ARE THE CLOTHES I LENT YOU, AREN'T THEY?
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TRYING TO DO...

ANYWAY,
I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO CALM DOWN EVER SINCE HE MOVED IN WITH ISLA
WHY NOT JUST LEAVE 'EM ALONE?
AND THAT WASN'T THE END OF THE NOISE, EITHER...
EVEN IF YOU SAY THAT...
THE GUYS HAVE BEEN HOLDING STRATEGY MEETINGS
I heard that from Zack.
TO HELP TSUKASA GET ALONG WITH HER BETTER.
...
IT IS TRUE THAT THE GUYS HAVE BEEN DISAPPEARING SOMEWHERE DURING LUNCH LATELY.
SO, THAT'S WHAT IT WAS.
...
EITHER WAY, THEY'RE OBVIOUSLY UP TO NO GOOD AGAIN.
SO, I HAVE TO WARN ISLA TO BE CAREFUL...
CAREFUL... HUH.
...
I SEE.

WALKING IN ON HER IN THE SHOWER, PRETENDING NOT TO NOTICE SHE'S THERE...
I COULD SEE YASUTAKA TALKING HIM INTO SOMETHING LIKE THAT
AH, I'VE ALREADY DONE...
WHEN DEALING WITH A PEEPING TOM, FIRST...
YOU NEED TO APPROPRIATELY GIVE THEM A PIECE OF YOUR MIND.
CRACK
WITHOUT MERCY.
THAT'S THE BEST WAY TO SET THEM STRAIGHT.
BY THE WAY, BRU, YOU WERE SAYING ...?
HUH?!
AH, NO, IT WAS NOTHING!
TH- THAT MIGHT BE A BIT DIFFICULT FOR ISLA, BUT.
I GUESS SHE NEEDS TO BE PREPARED...
WHAT DO YOU THINK, KAZUKI SAN?

AH, BUT...
I ALREADY SAID THIS, BUT, YOU SHOULD JUST LET THEM BE.
IT HASN'T HAPPENED YET THAT PARTNERS GOT ALONG MORE THAN JUST WELL
MM...
YEAH, SHE'S RIGHT, COME ON!
YOU GET ALONG WITH ZACKCCHI REALLY WELL WHEN YOU'RE AT THE DORM, TOO...
rub
rub
Like this
ZACK IS LIKE A LITTLE BROTHER TO ME..
rub
rub
Eru, let go;
WAI-
KAZUKI-SAN, DON'T GET ANY WEIRD IDEAS!
OH, SO YOU TWO HAVE THAT KIND OF RELATIONSHIP, DO YOU?
BUT, WELL,
THAT "RELATION-SHIP" IS WHAT I WANT TO TALK ABOUT.
I'M KIDDING.
I CAN TELL THAT MUCH JUST BY LOOKING AT YOU TWO, YOU KNOW.

WHEN YOU LIVE TOGETHER, YOUR RELATIONSHIP GROWS BEYOND THAT OF "JUST PARTNERS".
AND, SURPRISINGLY ENOUGH, THAT LEADS YOU TO WORK BETTER TOGETHER.
WHEN YOU THOROUGHLY UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER, IT'S MUCH EASIER TO BACK EACH OTHER UP.
AND IT MAKES IT EASIER TO ESTABLISH A MUTUAL TRUST.
YOU HAVEN'T REALIZED THAT AFTER LIVING WITH ZACK?
... I GUESS YOU HAVE.
THE REASON PARTNERS LIVE TOGETHER... HUH.
AH, THAT SOUNDS SO NICE—
Yeah
Yeah
BY THE WAY, ISLACCHI, HOW DO YOU ACTUALLY ACT AROUND TSUKASACCHI?
...

!!!
Huh
REALLY...
... THAT'S PRETTY MUCH IT.
... STILL, I DIDN'T THINK IT WAS SO BAD THAT YOU DON'T EVEN RESPOND WHEN HE TALKS TO YOU.
... I DID TELL HIM TO NOT MIND ME WHEN HE FIRST MOVED IN.
SO, SHE'S QUIET UNTIL TSUKASA GETS UP TO SOMETHING...
hmm
TSUKASACCHI IS LONELY, ISN'T HE.
THAT'S IT.
THAT'S IT?
SOMETIMES I ASK HIM IF HE WANTS ME TO MAKE TEA.
SO YOU JUST SAY NOTHING THE ENTIRE TIME?
... I KNEW IT.
AH, BUT,
IF I LIVED WITH ISLA, I WOULD DEFINITELY NEVER NEGLECT—
... ERROR.
I didn't quite get that

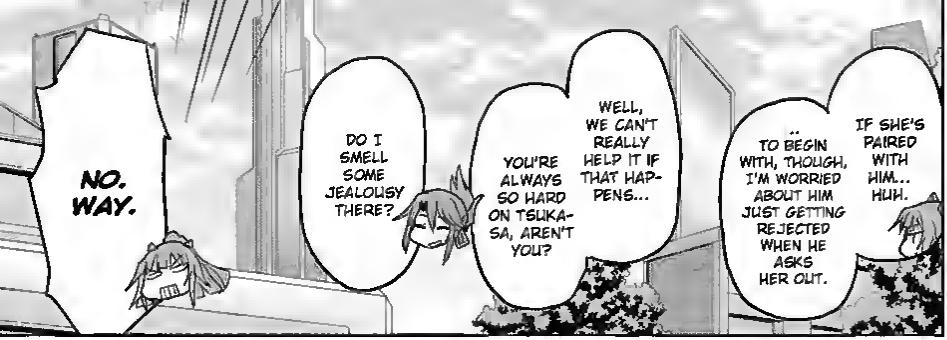
... WELL, HOW YOU'RE GOING TO TREAT YOUR PARTNER IS A PERSONAL THING.
IT'S NOT LIKE YOU HAVE TO BE FAMILY OR LOVERS.
... YEAH.
AND THEN YOU HAVE PEOPLE LIKE YASUTAKA, WHO'S BASICALLY NEVER IN HIS ROOM.
BESIDES, NO MATTER WHAT PEOPLE TELL YOU,
IT'S UP TO YOU TWO TO DECIDE WHAT YOUR RELATIONSHIP IS GOING TO BE LIKE.
JUST DO WHAT YOU LIKE.
.....
OBVIOUSLY, NEVER TALKING MEANS YOU'LL NEVER BUILD THAT MUTUAL TRUST, BUT,
WHEN I THINK ABOUT IT,
I WAS BASICALLY LIKE THAT, TOO...
MMM..

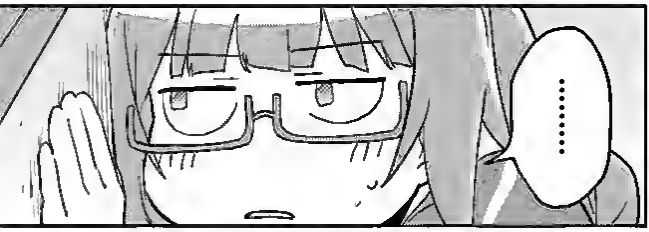
I HAVE ZACK TO THANK FOR THE RELATIONSHIP WE HAVE NOW.
GIVEN THAT,
MAYBE IT'S BEST TO NOT TRY TO STOP ANYTHING TSUKASA TRIES TO DO...
IT'LL BE TOO LATE TO ACT AFTER SOMETHING HAPPENS, THOUGH...
RIGHT,
BACK TO WORK, THEN.
stand
mmm
WHAT'S WITH THE FACE?
HM?
IF YOU'RE STILL THAT WORRIED, WHY NOT CHECK ON HIM, I GUESS...?
AH... YES,
RIGHT, I'LL DO THAT.

...
clack
click
NOT STICKING TO THE WALL TODAY?
click
...
I'M JUST TIRED.
SLAM
BESIDES, IF ANYTHING WEIRD HAP-PENS, WE'LL DEFINITELY HEAR IT OVER—
sign
...
SEE.
HAVE A NICE TRIP-
!?
slide
NOW LISTEN HERE...
WHAT THE HELL HAVE YOU BEEN UP TO EVERY SINGLE NIGHT—

KAZUKI -SAN,
YOU TOLD HIM TO INVITE ISLA OUT SOMEWHERE ON THEIR DAY OFF?!
—EVEN THOUGH SOMETHING LIKE THAT HAPPENED,
BESIDES, I MADE IT VERY CLEAR TO HIM THAT I WON'T OVERLOOK ANY FUNNY BUSINESS.
VERY CLEAR.
AH... WELL, IN THAT CASE, I GUESS ...
ISLA SAID THAT WAS JUST AN ACCIDENT, TOO.
MICHIRU, IT'S FINE.
THAT'S A TERRIBLE IDEA!
ISN'T THAT JUST A DATE...
IF EVERYTHING WENT WELL, THEY'RE PROBABLY OUT SHOPPING OR SOMETHING ABOUT NOW...
PLUS, ISLA...
IT'S HARD FOR ME TO JUST INTERFERE IN THEIR RELATIONSHIP.
WELL, I CAN'T HELP IT, WE USED TO BE PARTNERS.
KAZUKI -SAN..
EVEN THOUGH YOU SAID IT WOULD BE BEST TO LEAVE THEM ALONE...

COMPARED TO BEFORE, DON'T YOU THINK SHE'S BEEN MORE ACTIVE LATELY?
SINCE SHE'S BEEN PAIRED WITH TSUKASA,
SHE'S GOTTEN A LITTLE MORE TALKATIVE, AND SHE'S BEEN GETTING MAINTENANCE BY HERSELF MORE OFTEN.
IT'S TRUE THAT SHE'D NEVER HAVE COME TO ME TO ASK A FAVOR BY HERSELF BEFORE.
I NEED SOME FOR TOMOR-ROW.
CAN YOU MAKE THEM?
I love the ingredients here!
... NOW THAT YOU MEN-TION IT...
HONESTLY, HAVING HER AS A PARTNER IS KIND OF A PAIN.
ISLA CAN BE SLOW ON THE UPTAKE SOMETIMES, AND YOU KNOW HOW SHE ACTS IN PRIVATE.
I THINK SHE WOULD'VE GOTTEN USED TO THAT NO MATTER WHO HER PARTNER WAS.
THERE IS THAT, BUT,
DO YOU THINK IT'S BECAUSE SHE CAN GO OUT INTO THE FIELD MORE EASILY NOW?
IF SHE'S PAIRED WITH HIM,
I THINK THEY'LL HAVE NO PROBLEMS ESTABLISH-ING A GOOD MUTUAL TRUST.
BUT, TSUKASA IS CLEARLY READY TO TAKE THAT CHALLENGE HEAD-ON.
THEY SEEM PRETTY COMPATI-BLE.


NO. WAY.
DO I SMELL SOME JEALOUSY THERE?
YOU'RE ALWAYS SO HARD ON TSUKA-SA, AREN'T YOU?
WELL, WE CAN'T REALLY HELP IT IF THAT HAP-PENS...
.. TO BEGIN WITH, THOUGH, I'M WORRIED ABOUT HIM JUST GETTING REJECTED WHEN HE ASKS HER OUT.
IF SHE'S PAIRED WITH HIM... HUH.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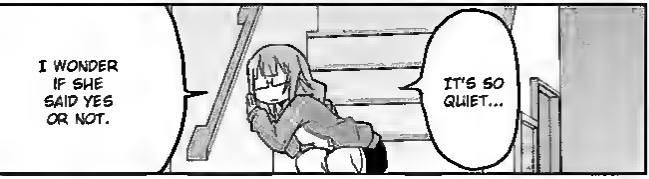
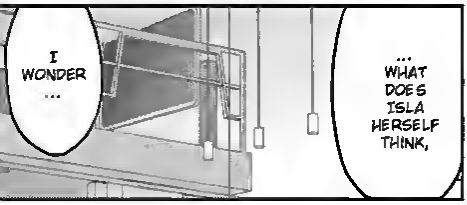
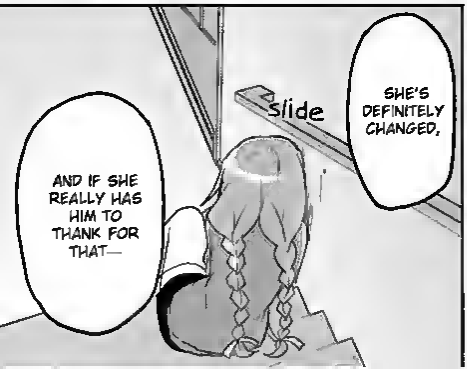

I WONDER IF SHE SAID YES OR NOT.
IT'S SO QUIET...


I WONDER ...
...WHAT DOES ISLA HERSELF THINK,


slide
SHE'S DEFINITELY CHANGED,
AND IF SHE REALLY HAS HIM TO THANK FOR THAT—

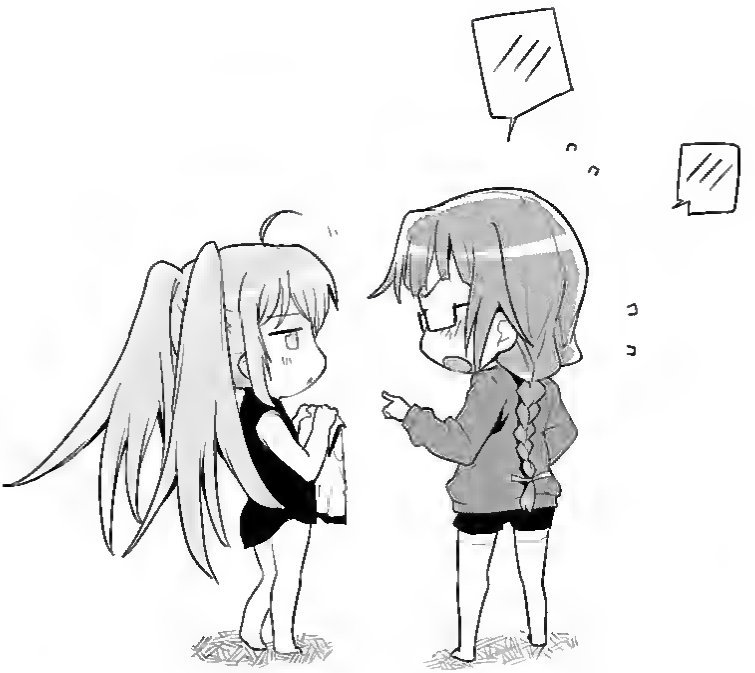
I CAN'T BE SO SURE HE DOESN'T HAVE AN ULTERIOR MOTIVE JUST YET.
I'LL ACCEPT THAT HE'S WORKING HARD FOR ISLA'S SAKE, BUT,

I WONDER ABOUT THAT...
"THEY SEEM PRETTY COM-PATI-BLE."
sigh
slip

IF YOU HAVE THAT MUCH FREE TIME ON YOUR HANDS, MAYBE YOU SHOULD GO GET SOME GROCERIES YOURSELF...
... OH,
YOU'RE STUCK TO THE WALL AGAIN...
I'M HOME—
slide
Twist
ZZZ
ZZZ
.....
... OH, BY THE WAY,
ISLA IS—
I FELL ASLEEP, HUH..
MM...
sigh
MORNING, MICHIRU.
I'M PRETTY SURE THEY DID GO OUT YESTERDAY.
A-H ...
IN THE END, I DIDN'T FIND OUT WHETHER THEY ACTUALLY WENT OUT OR NOT.
chirp
chirp
chirp
UGH ...
... I FELL ASLEEP IN A WEIRD POSI-TION.

AND SHE'S NOT REALLY THE KIND OF PERSON I CAN IMAGINE GOING OUT ON HER OWN ON HER DAY OFF.
SO, TSUKASA WAS PROBABLY WITH HER WHEN SHE LEFT.
LAST NIGHT, WHEN I CAME BACK FROM BUYING GROCERIES,
I SAW ISLA STANDING IN FRONT OF HER APARTMENT...
... MORNING.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
WELL, I CAN'T SEE WHY SHE'D BE THERE ALONE IF THEY BOTH CAME BACK AT THE SAME TIME.
adjust
"WHEN SHE LEFT"?
... WAIT A SECOND.
lift
I SEE.
I SHOULDN'T BE GETTING WORKED UP SO EARLY IN THE MORNING...
sigh
WELL, GIVEN THAT SHE WAS WAITING OUTSIDE ON PURPOSE WITHOUT GOING IN, THAT'S PROBABLY NOT WHAT HAPPENED.
WELL,
... MAYBE HE HAD TO RUN AWAY BECAUSE HE DID SOMETHING TO PISS HER OFF.
IF HE DID SOMETHING LIKE THAT, I'LL—
I GUESS I'LL ASK ABOUT THE DETAILS LATE-
ANYWAY,
WOOOO
GOOD spin spin
MORNIIING!

turn
SHUT
UUU UUU UP!
...?
HOO
I'M SO MOVED!
WOO
"GOOD MORN-ING"!
LISTEN! ISLA JUST SAID
"GOOD MORN-ING", HUH
WELL, IT IS TRUE THAT THEY SEEM TO BE PRETTY COMPATI-BLE.
BUT EVEN SO—
ISLA!
YOU NEED TO WATCH YOUR-SELF MORE!
?
GOD ...
upset
GIVEN THE CURRENT SITUATION, I GUESS THERE'S NO NEED TO WORRY ABOUT YESTERDAY.
... BUT,
swish
.....
WAIT,
SHE'S CHANG-ING RIGHT NOW!
YOU WAIT OUTSIDE!
SLAM



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